

Reserve Component Joint Officer Qualification Requirements: A Reassessment

by

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RESERVE COMPONENT JOINT OFFICER QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: A REASSESSMENT

by

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The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 (GNA) requires active component (AC) military officers to achieve joint qualification prior to promotion to general or flag officer rank. The statute does not extend this requirement to the reserve components (RC). Instead, the GNA requires the Secretary of Defense to establish personnel policies emphasizing joint education and experience for RC officers. These policies are to be as similar as practicable to those established for AC officers by Congress. Two decades after passage of the GNA, the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves (CNGR) recommended Congress require RC officers to achieve joint qualification prior to nomination for general or flag officer rank. While neither the Secretary of Defense nor the U.S. Congress have acted on this recommendation, the concept continues to garner attention among RC leaders. Before seeking statutory change, DOD should confirm and quantify requirements for RC officers with joint education and experience. Establishing new requirements incrementally, through policy rather than legislation, could enhance the joint experience and education of RC officers while mitigating risk and providing additional time to measure the effects on the RC officer corps.

RESERVE COMPONENT JOINT OFFICER QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: A REASSESSMENT

The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 (GNA) requires active component (AC) military officers to achieve joint qualification prior to promotion to general or flag officer rank.¹ The statute does not extend this requirement to reserve component (RC) officers. Instead, the GNA requires the Secretary of Defense to establish personnel policies emphasizing joint education and experience for RC officers. These policies are to be as similar as practicable to those established for AC officers by Congress.² Two decades after passage of the GNA, the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves (CNGR) recommended Congress require RC officers to achieve joint qualification prior to nomination for general or flag officer rank.³ While neither the Secretary of Defense nor Congress acted on this recommendation, the concept continues to garner attention among U.S. Army RC senior leaders. A number of published reports and articles have called for establishment of a joint qualification standard for promotion of Guard and Reserve officers.

Concurrently, Congress has expanded the definition of “joint experience.” The original concept of joint qualification focused on the proficiency of commanders and staffs at the operational and theater strategic levels, and on integration and unity of effort of the military services under the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs). After a decade of joint and combined counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations, the definition of “joint” as it pertains to officer management has evolved and expanded. Now, officers can earn joint credit through duties that do not fall within the original intent of Goldwater-Nichols, such as performing interagency, intergovernmental

and multinational duties.⁴ The acronym “JIIM”—joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational—often is used interchangeably with “joint.”

The idea of establishing a joint requirement for RC officers seems, on the surface, to have merit. The establishment of such a standard appears to be consistent with efforts to institutionalize the operational role of the reserve components.⁵ However, there is significant risk associated with establishing new requirements for RC leaders. This is particularly true in the National Guard, where both statutory roles and geographic constraints combine to make changing officer Professional Military Education (PME) and experience standards highly problematic. Creating new, more burdensome experiential and educational requirements is both unnecessary and unsustainable, and risks fundamentally altering the nature of officer leadership in the National Guard. A reserve component joint qualification requirement prior to promotion to general officer is neither feasible nor necessary, and continued calls for legislative action are not in the best interests of the Army or the nation.

To succeed in future conflict and to sustain an operational reserve, the Army’s reserve components must produce a pool of general officers with sufficient JIIM experience to fill three- and four-star general officer positions in the combatant commands, the Army and Joint Staffs, and in the National Guard Bureau.⁶ The Department of Defense (DOD) can accomplish this goal through changes in policy, rather than by seeking new statutory requirements. First, the DOD should conduct a requirements analysis to substantiate and quantify the need for joint qualified RC officers. Second, the DOD should codify the joint experience expectations used for promotion to lieutenant general or vice admiral, and should take steps to improve the

training and mentoring of newly-promoted RC general officers. Third, DOD should improve Joint Professional Military Education Phase II (JPME II) instruction by aligning resident and non-resident course content and ensuring both formats provide JPME II certification.⁷ Fourth, DOD should afford AC officers of the military services opportunities to gain JIIM experience by serving in a state's National Guard Joint Force Headquarters. Finally, DOD must create an effective system for recording and tracking the joint training and experience of RC officers. These five changes will enhance AC/RC integration and improve joint capabilities of the RC while affording greater flexibility and reversibility than would be afforded by changes in the law.

The Evolution of Joint Qualification Requirements

To evaluate whether DOD or the Army should seek further changes to statute or policy, it is useful to begin with a historical review of the development of joint qualification standards. The GNA did more than create joint standards for officers; it realigned the chain of command within DOD by increasing the authority of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the Commanders of the Unified and Specified Commands relative to the separate service Chiefs.⁸ Calls for this type of realignment were made as early as the Eisenhower administration.⁹ While the Services resisted change for decades, Congressional interest in pursuing change intensified following Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada.¹⁰ The difficulties experienced in the planning and execution of Urgent Fury provided Congress the impetus to further integrate the services, improve joint warfighting capability, and enhance combatant command authority. Congress established Joint Specialty Officer (JSO) criteria to improve the ability of the Joint Staff and the GCCs to conduct joint planning and operations. Similarly, by establishing the requirements for joint education and experience as

prerequisites for promotion to general or flag rank, Congress intended to improve professional competence at the Joint Task Force, theater, and Joint Staff levels.¹¹ The joint officer management provisions within the law served “to add support for the general effort to ensure a higher level of joint interaction.”¹²

Congress scrutinized the implementation of the Goldwater-Nichols reforms and continued to provide oversight of the effectiveness of joint officer management policies through Armed Forces Committee hearings. These hearings began almost immediately after passage of the law in 1986 and continued through most of the past decade.¹³ Following operations in the Balkans and the initiation of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the nature of post-Cold War conflict led to the evolution of joint concepts. Success hinged on developing and maintaining multinational coalitions, and counterinsurgency doctrine emphasized a whole of government approach.¹⁴ Having an effective joint force came to be seen as just one piece of a larger requirement: U.S. military efforts had to achieve unity of effort within a complex joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational (JIIM) environment. Additionally, Congress determined some officers gained valuable joint experiences performing in roles outside of specified Joint Duty Assignment List (JDAL) positions. The John Warner National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2007 captured these developments by establishing a points-based system for earning joint experience and expanding the definition of joint matters.¹⁵

Current Department of Defense (DOD) policy guidance incorporates the 2007 statutory requirements by replacing the original JSO system with one recognizing Joint Qualified Officers (JQO).¹⁶ Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 1300.19, first

published in October 2007, closed a gap between earlier policies and the GNA's requirement that DOD establish policies to govern RC joint officer management.¹⁷ The instruction provides a process by which RC officers can earn joint qualification.¹⁸ Subsequent updates to the instruction expanded the guidance by establishing "the goal of increasing the pool of RC joint qualified officers."¹⁹ Importantly, though, the most recent update emphasized that the requirement for joint qualification prior to nomination for brigadier general or rear admiral (lower half) remains unique to officers on the Active Duty List.²⁰

Assessing the Strategic Environment

The summary above described the development of existing joint qualification requirements. However, before evaluating proposals for expanding these requirements to RC officers, one also should consider the current and anticipated strategic environment. After a decade of continuous conflict in multiple theaters, the U.S. is reducing the scale and pace of its overseas contingency operations. U.S. combat forces have withdrawn from Iraq, the Afghanistan surge period is drawing to a close, and the U.S. goal is to transition the responsibility for direct combat operations to Afghan forces by 2014. These changes are reducing the number of RC officers serving on active duty, with a corresponding decrease to the number of RC officers serving in joint positions. In January 2012, the President and the Secretary of Defense issued strategic planning guidance which will guide U.S. strategic planning for the foreseeable future.²¹ The new guidance, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, outlines environmental considerations and resource constraints that will shape the knowledge, skills and abilities required of U.S. military leaders in the future.²²

As such, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* includes a number of points relevant to a consideration of joint qualification requirements. First, the document emphasizes that fiscal realities will require reductions in U.S. defense spending.²³ In order to “protect U.S. national interests and achieve the objectives of the 2010 *National Security Strategy* in this environment, *the Joint Force will need to recalibrate its capabilities...*”²⁴ In addition, the strategic planning guidance highlights that while “the National Guard and Reserves have consistently demonstrated their readiness and ability to make sustained contributions to national security,” this recalibration will necessitate a reexamination of the “appropriate AC/RC mix and level of readiness.”²⁵ This echoes language contained in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR).²⁶ The new strategy’s recurring themes are reductions in resources, finding innovative ways to accomplish missions with fewer dedicated resources, emphasizing readiness of forces over mere quantity, and providing for “reversibility” to react to changes in the strategic landscape.²⁷ Therefore, any changes to RC joint officer requirements must be aligned with future requirements and resource constraints in order to be feasible.

Evaluation of the CNGR Proposal for RC Joint Qualification Requirements

Congress created the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2005.²⁸

Congress tasked this Commission to report on the roles and missions of the reserve components; on how their capabilities may be best used to achieve national security objectives, including homeland defense; on their compensation and benefits and on the effects of possible changes in these areas on military careers, readiness, recruitment, and retention; on traditional and alternative career paths; on their policies and funding for training and readiness, including medical and personal readiness; on the adequacy of funding for their equipment and personnel; and on their organization, structure, and overall funding. Congress has asked this

Commission to provide it a road map to a strong, capable, sustainable reserve component.²⁹

Dr. John Nagl and Travis Sharp have described the CNGR as having “presented the most comprehensive review of Guard and Reserves policy in the nation’s history.”³⁰ In the course of its three reports and culminating with the commission’s final report in January 2008, the CNGR made 118 specific recommendations for changes in the laws and policies governing the reserve components.³¹ Within the first two years following publication, Congress or DOD acted on 105 of the recommendations, and more were incorporated into the 2012 NDAA.³²

The CNGR’s final report presented findings and recommendations in six broad categories with one creating a continuum of service to improve personnel management of RC personnel. The commission’s recommendations about joint qualification for RC officers is a subset of the chapter entitled, “Creating a Continuum of Service: Personnel Management for an Integrated Total Force where the CNGR states the RC will be essential to a new, post-Cold War defense establishment.”³³ A continuum of service management system would permit DOD to “retain highly trained and skilled personnel” by allowing reserve officers the flexibility to move back and forth between active and reserve duty assignments based on the needs of the service and individual officers’ preferences.³⁴ To achieve this continuum of service and improve AC/RC integration, the CNGR called for changes to the laws and policies governing personnel management. Of the twenty CNGR recommendations related to personnel management, seven were specifically related to joint qualification, joint education, and joint officer management.³⁵ For detailed information, Table 1, identifies the most pertinent of the CNGR’s proposals related to joint qualification of RC officers.

Item #	CNGR RECOMMENDATIONS
12	Congress should amend the Goldwater-Nichols Act to require reserve component officers to be designated as “joint qualified” (under the new joint qualification system, effective October 1, 2007) and, at the end of a 10-year transition period, to make joint qualification a criterion for promotion to flag and general officer rank. Congress should mandate that the services develop an action plan and milestones and report regularly to Congress on progress made to accomplish this goal.
12a	To provide an incentive for early attainment of joint service qualification, service Secretaries should charge their reserve promotion boards selecting officers for the rank of colonel or Navy captain in the reserves to assign additional promotion weight to those officers who have achieved full joint education, have served in joint duty assignments, or are recognized as joint qualified.
12b	Each service should integrate the management of its active and reserve component service members to better administer its military personnel and ensure that all members are afforded the joint duty and educational opportunities necessary for promotion to senior ranks.
13	For the next five years, DOD should annually increase the number of fully funded slots allocated to reserve component officers at the National Defense university, service war colleges, and the 10-week Joint Professional Military Education II in-residence course to foster greater interaction between active and reserve component students and to increase the number of educationally qualified reserve officers. DOD should direct senior service schools to adjust the curricula and requirements in their distance learning programs to include material that will satisfy JPME II requirements for joint qualifications, as they have done for their in-residence courses.
13a	Capitalizing on technology, Advanced Joint Professional Military Education should be redesigned to provide formats that encourage active and reserve component participation from all services in a manner that satisfies course objectives, affords social interaction, and values the individual service members’ time and other obligations.
13b	Active component officers should be permitted to attend and receive full credit for AJPME, and the course should be viewed as equivalent to the Joint and Combined Warfighting School.
13c	DOD should require that all reserve component officers selected for general or flag officer rank attend CAPSTONE; the services should provide full funding for this effort, and the school should have sufficient capacity to accommodate these officers without significant delay.
16	For both active and reserve component officers, criteria for granting joint duty experience credit should be flexible enough to allow for a qualitative assessment of proficiency based on knowledge, skills, and abilities in joint matters, not on inflexible time-based requirements. Congress should expand the statutory definitions of joint matters to incorporate service involving armed forces in operations, including support to civil authorities, with state and local agencies.

Table 1. CNGR Recommendations for Joint Qualification of RC Officers³⁶

Many defense “think tanks” strongly endorsed the CNGR’s “continuum of service” recommendations. Christine Wormuth’s brief Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) article is representative:

The commission goes well beyond earlier calls to develop an integrated pay and personnel system and provides a detailed blueprint to make the “continuum of service”—a concept that until now has largely been a good idea that exists only on paper—a reality. The Defense Department and Congress should work together to implement all 20 recommendations in this section of the report.³⁷

In fact, the CNGR based many of its recommendations on previous research and strategic thought.³⁸ For example, in 2005, CSIS published a report entitled *The Future of the National Guard and Reserves*.³⁹ This report, which was third in a series studying opportunities for further reform of DOD after Goldwater-Nichols, recommended creating a continuum of service to sustain the operational reserve by updating the “social contract” between DOD and RC members, families and employers.⁴⁰ Concurrently, the RAND Corporation published a series of studies on joint officer management, including a few focused on joint education and experience requirements for RC officers.⁴¹

In addition, similar studies continued after the publication of the CNGR’s final report. A 2010 study by the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) contained a detailed CNGR “score card,” and emphasized the importance of completing the work begun by the commission.⁴² The recommendations of CSIS, RAND, CNAS and the CNGR convey the need to improve joint officer management and joint officer qualification policy and procedures for RC officers as a means of improving AC/RC integration.

However, despite the consensus on the need to improve RC joint officer management, neither the Secretary of Defense nor Congress acted on the

commission's recommendation to require joint qualification for RC officers prior to promotion to general or flag officer rank. This points to one of the few shortcomings of the CNGR final report: in calling for this statutory change, the report calls for more than establishing a realistic pathway to joint qualification and a more effective system for capturing joint experience. Rather, the CNGR recommends changes in the law to resolve the shortcomings of RC joint officer management without justifying the need for this approach. Also, the CNGR report does not provide an empirical analysis of the need for joint qualified RC officers, and does not justify making changes in law rather than policy.

The one study dealing directly with the subject of joint qualification for RC officers is a RAND report published in 2006 which stops short of recommending such a step.⁴³ For example, the study notes that requirements for RC joint officers were not clearly defined.⁴⁴ RAND could not determine if there were sufficient joint positions in reserve units to make such a requirement feasible.⁴⁵ Therefore, RAND concluded its study of RC joint officer management by recommending further research and analysis.⁴⁶

Based on the CNGR's final report, it appears the commission's recommendation for statutory change proceeds from the presumption that, in order to achieve the Total Force integration goals recommended in the GNA, RC officer promotions must be based on the same standards as those of active component (AC) officers. The report presumes increased utilization of RC officers, "including general and flag officers in command of total force formations," requires greater emphasis on RC joint qualifications.⁴⁷ The commission assumes that, as joint integration of the active components of the military services was driven by statutory requirements for joint

service prior to promotion to general or flag rank, integration of the RC would require the same remedy.⁴⁸ The CNGR's call for parity in AC and RC standards is based on this assumption, yet the commission's report does not substantiate it. In fact, the CGNR's statements about the accomplishments of the RC in the past decade run counter to such an assumption and indicate weakness in the internal logic of the report.

Despite this weakness, the parity argument persists. In his 2008 U.S. Army War College Strategy Research Project, Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Olivo reiterated the recommendations of the CNGR by writing:

Until reasonable legislation, policies and regulations are developed and implemented that would hold RC officers to the same standards as their AC counterparts, which would require them to attain joint experience, education, and qualification to achieve promotion to senior ranks, the nation and the DOD will not be able to take full advantage of the unique skills and experiences that these professionals possess.⁴⁹

Lt Col Olivo justified this conclusion by stating the "execution of the war on terror will require the use of an operational reserve..., (members of the) RC must become joint qualified commensurate with their peers."⁵⁰ As did the CNGR, Lt Col Olivo presents "parity" not as a means to end, but as an end in itself: his argument is based on an assumption that parity is necessary.

A recent *Armed Forces Journal* article contains a similar refrain, though more nuanced. Brigadier General Scott D. Legwold and Lieutenant Colonel David W. May proposed to "Establish in law a requirement for all reserve component officers to be joint qualified before being considered for promotion to flag rank."⁵¹ The authors propose creating "a reserve component joint duty qualification system" in order to "increase the ability of midgrade and senior leaders to contribute in interagency and joint operations, at home and abroad."⁵² Similar to proponents of the GNA, BG Legwold and Lt Col May

portray promotion rules as a forcing function to ensure support for increasing RC officers' experience in JIIM environments. In addition, the authors believe service in the Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) of a state or territory National Guard should merit joint experience credit.⁵³ A shortcoming of their approach is this path to joint experience would be viable only for National Guard officers. If one uses access to joint experience to evaluate the feasibility of joint experience requirements, state JFHQ positions would support a statutory change for Army and Air National Guard officer promotions but not for the other RCs. It is unlikely however, Congress would create a disparity between general officer promotion requirements in the Guard and those of the other reserve components.⁵⁴

Another flaw in the CNGR report is that it did not detail the risks associated with its recommended approach. The CNGR's proposed statutory change would increase the amount of time RC officers would spend on active duty, away from their civilian careers, for joint professional military education (JPME) and experience. Even though reserve component officers performed well during the wartime transformation from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve, DOD's senior leaders recognize there are limits. The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review articulated the importance of "keeping faith" with the RC by predictable and judicious employment.⁵⁵ Also, uncertainty in the civilian job market adds additional pressure on reservists and their families as finding and keeping a job is even more difficult for those who serve through continuing deployments.⁵⁶ As the duration and frequency of extended periods of active service increases, the number of personnel willing and able to continue to serve may decrease. At some point, increased demands could affect retention of RC officers. Even if overall

retention rates remain acceptable to DOD's senior leaders, more demands on officers' time could impact on the quality of the leaders remaining in the service. Potentially, the demand for time for active duty joint training and experience could become so great it could reduce the variety and significance of civilian experience which is a key contribution of the RC officer corps.⁵⁷ Policies that do not consider the time required of citizen soldiers to meet new standards may not be sustainable and are inconsistent with the reversibility concept described in *Sustaining Global Leadership*.⁵⁸

Additionally, the assumption that joint qualification is a critical prerequisite for reserve officers to serve in joint staff positions runs counter to another element of GNA joint officer management. The Panel on Military Education of the U.S. House Armed Services Committee report stated, "In fact, non-JSOs are essential to the proper functioning of the joint system because they bring current Service expertise and credibility to bear in considering the solutions to joint."⁵⁹ Thus, if the Joint Staff and GCC staffs require officers who are not joint specialists, it is clear that not all RC officers assigned to those staffs need be joint qualified. This makes the problem of quantifying the need for joint qualified RC officers more complex.

Given that strategic decision making in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment involves risk, responsible strategic leaders should gather necessary and available information prior to making decisions.⁶⁰ Thus the lack of objective data to substantiate requirements for joint qualified RC officers should preclude changes based on a perceived need for parity with AC officers. DOD should measure both the need for reserve officers with joint training and experience, and the number of opportunities through which RC officers can earn joint credit.⁶¹ DOD's

strategic leaders should study whether the number of RC officers who served on the Joint Staff and GCC staffs in the past decade represents an enduring requirement, or whether this was an anecdotal result of manning headquarters for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Barring broad changes to the Title 10 responsibilities of the Joint Staff and GCC Commanders, the planning and conduct of joint operations and the responsibility for command at the GCC level will remain AC responsibilities. Finally, decision makers should weigh the benefits of increased joint capabilities against the potential impact of these changes on the pool of citizens willing to serve as reserve officers. One could argue the current situation is too uncertain to justify creating laws to require joint qualification for RC officers to achieve general or flag officer rank.

Proposed Solutions

If DOD determines that implementing the CNGR's recommendations for achieving total force integration is not a viable approach at this time, what actions could DOD take to accomplish the commission's goal of increasing total force integration? To support DOD's personnel needs, the RC officer management system should produce a sufficient number of JQOs to meet service requirements. Additionally, the system should develop enough general and flag officers with the level of joint education and experience required to fill designated RC billets on the CJCS, service and GCC staffs. However, specific requirements remain ambiguous, the joint and RC officer management systems are complex, and the future is volatile and uncertain.

Therefore, in a VUCA environment, the best solution available to strategic leader often is to manage the problem rather than attempt a solution with significant risks.⁶² Congress provided the Secretary of Defense with broad latitude for developing and implementing joint officer management policies and procedures for the RC.⁶³ Given the

need for continued analysis of the requirements for joint experience in the RC, and understanding that statutory changes are difficult to repeal compared to adjustments in policy, the latter is clearly an appropriate course in the short term. The five steps described below should improve RC joint officer management, while hedging against potential negative effects of new statutory requirements.

First, DOD should conduct a requirements analysis to clarify and quantify the requirements for RC officers with joint education and experience.⁶⁴ DOD force managers should verify and document the number of positions, grades, and amount of joint training and experience required. DOD should also specify whether joint RC positions should be filled by traditional reserve component officers, or by Active Guard-Reserve (AGR) personnel on extended, voluntary active duty tours.

Second, DOD should codify joint qualification expectations and standards for RC general and flag officers. The current approach used to manage Army Reserve and National Guard general officers emphasizes recency and echelon of joint experience. For example, to determine whether an officer is a viable candidate for promotion to Lieutenant General, the General Officer Management Office (GOMO) considers a year of joint experience as a general officer to be more relevant than if the officer was a Joint Qualified Officer (JQO) at the field grade level.⁶⁵ DOD should establish this practice in policy to communicate developmental expectations to the RC officer corps and eliminate misperceptions about joint service requirements. Furthermore, DOD should assign retired three and four-star general and flag officers as mentors to RC brigadier generals and rear admirals (lower half) serving in Joint Staff or GCC positions.⁶⁶

Third, DOD should implement changes in JPME II and SSCs to improve AC/RC integration by increasing the number of JPME opportunities available to RC officers and as the CNGR recommended, mandate that non-resident senior service college (SSC) programs obtain certification to provide JPME II.⁶⁷ In addition, the requirements of SSC non-resident programs should be aligned with the Advanced Joint Professional Military Education Program, and with each other, to facilitate increased cross-service enrollment in the non-resident SSCs. Similarly, SSC resident and non-resident courses should be open to both AC and RC officers to facilitate increased interaction between the two components.⁶⁸ Finally, the CJCS should require service schools to expand the scope and depth of RC material within the curricula of JPME II and designate an RC topic as a “Special Area of Emphasis.”⁶⁹

Fourth, DOD should afford active component officers opportunities to serve within the National Guard Joint Force Headquarters of a state or territory.⁷⁰ Such experience would increase AC-RC integration, and could provide AC officers with developmental JIIM experience with an emphasis on homeland security, crisis response, and defense support to civil authorities (DSCA).⁷¹ DOD could measure and track the experiences of AC officers assigned to JFHQ-State positions to determine whether such service merits joint credit or inclusion on the JDAL.⁷² If the service is determined to meet the definition of “joint matters,” joint experience credit might also be awarded to Army and Air National Guard officers assigned to these organizations.⁷³

Finally, as DOD develops its approach to implement the continuum of service concept, the department must develop management tools and information system capabilities to track and record the joint training and experience of RC officers.⁷⁴ This

would include facilitating an “opt-in” system to capitalize on the time and talents of RC officers willing to serve extended voluntary tours of active service.⁷⁵ If too few officers are willing to perform such duty, DOD or service leadership could reward this service by increasing the emphasis that RC promotion selection boards place on JPME or joint experience.⁷⁶ However, given the potential impact of additional time requirements on RC officer retention, DOD and the services should not establish de facto requirements for extended active service, as these could threaten the citizen-soldier basis of the RC officer corps.

These five steps would enable RC strategic leaders to continue to manage change, while providing time for further analysis. In addition, policy changes, rather than statute, provide DOD adaptability, flexibility and reversibility. DOD could implement changes gradually to reduce or defer costs. Likewise, RC senior leaders can provide sustained emphasis and oversight to ensure changes receive support during a period of constrained resources.

Assessing the Associated Risk

This proposed five step solution provides a way to increase total force integration while mitigating the risk associated with the CNGR’s recommendations. The approach recognizes a need to increase joint experience and education within the RC and preserves the emphasis on balancing RC officers’ civilian and military roles. Preserving this balance is central to maintaining a culture that values traditional RC officers (those not interested in repeated, long-term tours of voluntary active service). However, this approach also contains risk which one can assess by applying the framework established in the 2010 QDR, which categorizes risks in four primary areas: Operational Risk, Force Management Risk, Institutional Risk, and Future Challenges Risk.⁷⁷

Operational Risk. The proposed solution would not significantly impact the overall ability of reserve component forces to perform their primary functions. Intuitively, the minor and gradual changes to JPME would result in some improvements in the level of joint training among the RC officer corps. Additionally, assuming the current drawdown of forces deployed to the CENTCOM area of operations continues, the resultant decrease in demand will reduce opportunities for RC officers to gain joint experience through joint, combined and multinational operations. Overall, the Operational Risk of this proposed strategy is negligible.

Force Management Risk. The five step strategy avoids a significant increase in the number of years of active service required in the course of an RC officer's career. Implementing a statutory requirement for joint qualification would place additional burdens on citizen-soldiers, families and employers. If, as is currently planned, the operational reserve component sustains a 1:4 ratio of operational service—one year of mobilization in every five year period—a twenty year career will include at least four years of active duty.⁷⁸ Adding onto this already substantial burden by requiring extended active service in joint schools and positions could become a disincentive for continued reserve service by those officers with the most significant civilian skill sets (business executives, IT professionals, physicians, etc.) because of the time demands inherent to these occupations. A more cautious approach prevents unnecessary disincentives for continued service for traditional RC officers. Additionally, choosing not to make extended, active joint service a statutory requirement for promotion will reduce the likelihood of future shortages of qualified candidates for advancement to general/flag officer rank within the RC. While the proposed changes to JPME and promotion policy

may have some impact, it is likely that this approach involves significantly less risk to force structure than implementing the CNGR's recommendation.

Institutional Risk. The strategic approach proposed above calls for gradual implementation, in part to limit cost. By mandating that officers competing for general or flag officer rank possess joint experience, the CNGR recommendation would create additional active service requirements for RC officers. DOD would need to allocate additional funds to support these tours. In a fiscally-constrained environment described by *Sustaining Global Leadership*, a solution that requires such significant increases in spending is not feasible.

Future Challenges Risk. The approach outlined here provides for additional opportunities for joint training and experience for RC officers and for improvements in AC/RC integration. Even if not fully effective, this approach would leave the reserve component no less prepared than otherwise. However, the more expansive solution proposed by the CNGR would likely lead to greater joint warfighting skills and abilities across the RC officer corps.

The five step solution outlined above bears risk. However, the risks are less than those associated with the CNGR's recommendation in all but one area. Adopting these recommendations would involve assuming calculated risk in Future Challenges in favor of reducing risk in the other areas.

The Way Ahead: Modest, Measured Improvement in RC Joint Officer Management

The GNA gave the Secretary of Defense latitude to establish joint officer management policies for the RC. Establishing statutory requirements to govern RC joint officer management could risk increased RC officer attrition and reduce flexibility and reversibility. Implementing modest improvements in policy allows time to measure the

impact of policy changes and substantiate the amount and type of JIIM experience required of senior RC officers.

In addition to the analysis described above, DOD should conduct further research in two areas. First, DOD should assess the impact on the proficiency of JQOs serving on Joint and GCC staffs resulting from the decision to grant joint experience credit for service in interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational positions.⁷⁹ For example, DOD should analyze whether service in the “IIM” portions of the JIIM environment equates to service in a joint staff to determine whether the expanded definition of joint service may have undermined the GNA’s goal of increased service integration and joint warfighting skills. Second, DOD should assess whether enduring requirements exist for RC JQOs to serve on CJCS or GCC staffs. DOD should study whether the number of RC officers required for these positions was unique to the OIF/OEF period. If the requirements are enduring, DOD should determine whether traditional RC or AGR officers should fill them.⁸⁰ DOD should also determine whether reserve officers assigned to joint staffs should be joint qualified prior to the assignment, or whether joint organizations could obtain the requisite RC input and perspective from RC officers who are not JQO.⁸¹ The answers to these questions would help to identify the need for further changes to RC joint officer management policies beyond those proposed in this project.

A gradual, incremental approach to reforming RC joint officer management policies would enhance the joint warfighting knowledge, skills and abilities of senior RC officers, however, expansive solutions could undermine the traditional citizen-soldier basis of RC forces. As DOD attempts to sustain an operational reserve force during

peacetime, RC senior leaders should scrutinize increases in the time required of RC officers for resident education and active duty tours. While Army National Guard and Army Reserve leaders should take pride in their accomplishments during a decade of continuous conflict, attempts to “fix” an unbroken force should be made with caution, and a commitment to preserve the role of the traditional citizen-soldier.

Endnotes

¹ *Reserve Officers Not on the Active Duty List*, U.S. Code, vol. 38, sec. 619 (1986).

² *Reserve Officers Not on the Active Duty List*, U.S. Code, vol. 38, sec. 666 (1986).

³ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21st-Century Operational Force* (Washington, D.C.: Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, 2008), 147.

⁴ M. Wade Markel, Henry A. Leonard, Charlotte Lynch, Christina Panis, Peter Schirmer, and Carra S. Sims, *Developing U.S. Army Officers' Capabilities for Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational Environments*, (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2011), 1-2.

⁵ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, 19.

⁶ COL Roger D. Etzel, Chief, National Guard General Officer Management Office, electronic mail interview by author, February 27, 2012.

⁷ The phases of JPME are described in a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction. See: CJCSI 1800.01D, *Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP)*, July 15, 2009, with change 1, December 15, 2011.

⁸ John T. Correll, “The Campaign for Goldwater-Nichols,” *Air Force Magazine* 94, no. 10 (October 2011): 68, <http://www.airforce-magazine.com/MagazineArchive/Documents/2011/October%202011/1011campaign.pdf> (accessed February 3, 2012).

⁹ Ibid, 69.

¹⁰ Ronald H. Cole, *Operation Urgent Fury: The Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Grenada, 12 October-2 November 1983* (Washington, D.C.: Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1997), 64.

¹¹ Katherine Lemay Brown, *Department of Defense Reorganization Act Program of 1986: Proposals for Reforming the Joint Officer Personnel Management Program* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, July 18, 2000), 5-9.

¹² Ibid, 4-5.

¹³ U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, *Another Crossroads? Professional Military Education Two Decades After the Goldwater-Nichols Act and the Skelton Panel* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. House of Representatives, April 2010), 2-4.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency*, Field Manual 3-26 (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters Department of the Army, December 15, 2006), 1-22.

¹⁵ Markel, Leonard, Lynch, Panis, Schirmer, and Sims, *Developing U.S. Army Officers' Capabilities*, 1-2.

¹⁶ The original GNA language, an officer who had achieved the required joint training and experience was designated a "Joint Specialty Officer." In 2005, Congress revised this system, replacing the term "Specialty" with "Qualified." The change was more than semantic; the new system provided for different levels of qualification. For instance, an officer at the O5-O6 level, who had 36 months of qualifying joint experience and who had completed a War College level, JPME II course, was designated JQO Level III. For detailed information about current DOD and CJCS policy, see: DODI 1300.19, *DoD Joint Officer Management Program*, with Change 2, February 16, 2010; and CJCSI 1330.05, *Joint Officer Management Program Procedures*, May 1, 2008.

¹⁷ *Reserve Officers Not on the Active Duty List*, U.S. Code, vol. 38, sec. 666 (1986).

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, *DoD Joint Officer Management Program*, Department of Defense Instruction 1300.19 (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, October 31, 2007, with change 2, February 16, 2010), 53-56.

¹⁹ Ibid, 4.

²⁰ Ibid, 3.

²¹ Barack Obama, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, DC: The White House, January 3, 2012).

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid, 1.

²⁴ Ibid, 4.

²⁵ Ibid, 7.

²⁶ Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Defense Department, February 2010), 53.

²⁷ Obama, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 7.

²⁸ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves*, 1.

²⁹ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves*, 1.

³⁰ John A. Nagl and Travis Sharp, *An Indispensible Force: Investing in America's National Guard and Reserves* (Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Security, September 12, 2010), <http://www.cnas.org/node/4997> (accessed January 27, 2012), 9.

³¹ Ibid, 9.

³² Ibid.

³³ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves*, 113.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves*, 147-149.

³⁶ Ibid, 147-148.

³⁷ Christine Wormuth, "The CNGR Final Report: The Best Shot for a Stronger, Sustainable Reserve Component," February 1, 2008, http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/080201_wormuth_cngr.pdf (accessed February 3, 2012), 1.

³⁸ Wormuth, "The CNGR Final Report," 1.

³⁹ Christine E. Wormuth, Michele Flournoy, Patrick T. Henry, and Clark A. Murdock, *The Future of the National Guard and Reserves: The Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase III Report* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2006).

⁴⁰ Ibid, 94-98.

⁴¹ For more detailed review of the RAND findings and recommendations, see: Harry J. Thie, Margaret C. Harrell, Sheila Nataraj Kirby, Al Crego, Roland J. Yardley, and Sonia Nagda, *Framing a Strategic Approach for Reserve Component Joint Officer Management* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2006), xvii-xxv and 73-77. See also: Raymond E. Conley, Ralph Masi, Bernard D. Rostker, Herbert J. Shukiar, and Steve Drezner, *Enhancing the Performance of Senior Department of Defense Civilian Executives, Reserve Component General/Flag Officers, and Senior Noncommissioned Officers in Joint Matters* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2008), 27-49.

⁴² Nagl and Sharp, *An Indispensible Force*, 9.

⁴³ Thie, Harrell, Kirby, Crego, Yardley and Nagda, *Framing a Strategic Approach for Reserve Component Joint Officer Management*, 75-77.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 51-52.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 72.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 75-77.

⁴⁷ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves*, 139.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 138-139.

⁴⁹ Kenneth Olivo, *Reserve Joint Officer Qualification System – Getting it Right*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, March 15, 2008), 2.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 11.

⁵¹ Scott D. Legwold and David W. May, “Disjointed,” *Armed Forces Journal* 149, no. 4 (November 2011): 40.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid, 16-18, 40.

⁵⁴ Continued calls for statutory change must be considered in context. Consider the two representative pieces referenced here: the 2008 SRP by Lt Col Kenneth Olivo, and the *Armed Forces Journal* article by Brig Gen Legwold and Lt Col May. The authors of these works have similar backgrounds: all are reserve officers who were serving the RC in a full-time capacity. Lt Col Olivo was a USMC Reserve officer and resident War College student, and then continued to serve in an active status. (See Lt Col Kenneth Olivo, “My Profile” page in Army Knowledge Online/Defense Knowledge Online, <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/user/kenneth.olivo>, accessed March 19, 2012.) Brig Gen Legwold and Lt Col May are both full-time, dual-status military technicians assigned to the headquarters of the Wisconsin National Guard (Lt Col David W. May, Wisconsin Air National Guard, telephone interview by author, March 19, 2012). While there is no reason to doubt the intentions of these writers, one must at least consider that these officers’ opinions may have been formed, in part, based on their personal experiences, and that these experiences were not representative of the typical, traditional reserve component officer. It is noteworthy that officers who are not challenged with balancing military and civilian careers are advocating requirements that would substantially increase time requirements for traditional RC officers. (The intent of this note is merely to emphasize the need for caution, and to highlight the importance of additional analytical research to quantify potential costs and benefits before enacting sweeping changes to the demands placed on senior RC leaders. The reference to these officers is in no way intended to call into question their credibility; their works clearly indicate the authors’ commitment to their profession.)

⁵⁵ Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Defense Department, February 2010), 53.

⁵⁶ Nagl and Sharp, *An Indispensable Force*, 25.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 14.

⁵⁸ The concept of “reversibility” is one of the risk mitigation approaches described in *Sustaining U.S. Global leadership*. The strategy states that changes to the size and posture of the force, AC/RC mix, etc., must be reversible in the event of “shocks or evolutions in the strategic, operational, economic, and technological spheres.” See Obama, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 7.

⁵⁹ U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Panel on Military Education, *Report of the Panel on Military Education of the One Hundredth Congress of the Committee on the Armed Services*, 101st Cong., 1st sess., April 21, 1989, 52, quoted in Scott A. Carpenter, “The Joint Officer: A Professional Specialist,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 63 (October 2011), 126.

⁶⁰ Stephen J. Gerras, ed., *Strategic Leadership Primer* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2010), 11.

⁶¹ Thie, Harrell, Kirby, Crego, Yardley and Nagda, *Framing a Strategic Approach for Reserve Component Joint Officer Management*, 76-77.

⁶² Gerras, *Strategic Leadership Primer*, 53.

⁶³ *Reserve Officers Not on the Active Duty List*, U.S. Code, vol. 38, sec. 666 (1986).

⁶⁴ Thie, Harrell, Kirby, Crego, Yardley and Nagda, *Framing a Strategic Approach for Reserve Component Joint Officer Management*, 75-77.

⁶⁵ COL Roger D. Etzel, Chief, National Guard General Officer Management Office, telephone interview by author, January 11, 2012.

⁶⁶ Mark A. McGuire, “Senior Officers and Strategic Leader Development,” *Joint Force Quarterly* (Autumn/Winter 2001-02), 96, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/jfq/1829.pdf> (accessed March 12, 2012).

⁶⁷ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves*, 147-148.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Nagl and Sharp, *An Indispensable Force*, 28-29.

⁷⁰ Conley, Masi, Rostker, Shukiar, Drezner, *Enhancing the Performance of Senior Department of Defense Civilian Executives, Reserve Component General/Flag Officers, and Senior Noncommissioned Officers*, 38.

⁷¹ John A. Nagl, Brian M. Burton, “Revitalizing America’s Officer Corps,” in *Keeping the Edge: Revitalizing America’s Military Officer Corps*, (Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Security, February 4, 2010), <http://www.cnas.org/node/4077> (accessed January 27, 2012), 71-72.

⁷² A similar concept was proposed by LTG H. Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau, in 2007. The National Guard JIIM concept was described to the author by LTC Thomas Donegan, Army National Guard, in September 2009.

⁷³ Legwold and May, "Disjointed," 18.

⁷⁴ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves*, 20-21.

⁷⁵ Conley, Masi, Rostker, Shukiar, Drezner, *Enhancing the Performance of Senior Department of Defense Civilian Executives, Reserve Component General/Flag Officers, and Senior Noncommissioned Officers*, 43.

⁷⁶ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves*, 19-20.

⁷⁷ Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Defense Department, February 2010), 90.

⁷⁸ John M. McHugh and Raymond T. Odierno, *2012 Army Posture Statement: The Nation's Force of Decisive Action*, Addendum G – Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN), https://secureweb2.hqda.pentagon.mil/VDAS_ArmyPostureStatement/2012/addenda/addenda_g.aspx (accessed 17 March 2012).

⁷⁹ This recommendation is very similar to recommendation 16 in the CNGR final report. See Table 1 of this report. Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves*, 148.

⁸⁰ Thie, Harrell, Kirby, Crego, Yardley and Nagda, *Framing a Strategic Approach for Reserve Component Joint Officer Management*, 77.

⁸¹ Carpenter, "The Joint Officer: A Professional Specialist," 126.